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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to create the portrait of a teacher educator implementing the case study method to determine what knowledge helps a teacher educator facilitate a case study discussion and what dilemmas teacher educators may encounter when teaching a case. Two portraits titled "Dealing With Discipline and Classroom Management Issues" and "Dealing with Special Needs Students" are presented. Each story is followed by a cross-case analysis of the teaching act. Through video and audio tapes of the teacher educator teaching a case, in-class observations, and reflective journals kept by both teacher educators and prospective teachers, insight was gained into the experience of teaching a case and the multiple tensions instructors may face as they prepare for and teach a case study. Results suggest cooperative learning and role playing as two strategies particularly suited to the teaching of cases. A jigsaw approach to teaching cases similar in theme enabled prospective teachers to conduct cross case analyses; cross case analyses provided an opportunity for prospective teachers to construct and test personal theories of teaching and learning; and role playing cases helped preservice teachers reflect on their personal theories of teaching and learning. Course syllabi are appended. (Contains 25 references.) (LL)

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When Teacher Educators Collaboratively Reflect on Their Practices: A Case Study on Teaching Cases

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When Teacher Educators Collaboratively Reflect on Their Practices:
A Case Study on Teaching Cases

A current innovation in teacher education is the case study method (Shulman, 1987). The case study approach or method can be defined as an instructional technique whereby the major ingredients of a problematic teaching situation are presented in narrative form to preservice teachers for the purposes of problem solving (Kowalski, Weaver, & Henson, 1990). Although noted scholars have advocated the infusion of the case study method into the preparation of preservice teacher education coursework (Doyle, 1990; Shulman, 1987), the use of the case study approach in teacher education pedagogy is still in its infancy, with little reported research documenting its use or impact (Scott, 1991).

In order to explore the use of the case study approach in teacher education, the researchers engaged in a collaborative action research project to explore their own practices as teacher educators as one researcher implemented the case study approach into her teaching of a four credit seminar course taken concurrently with the student teaching experience. The foundation for this study is laid by the recent efforts to listen to the voices of teachers in educational research. Many educational researchers are joining with teachers to study and document their lives in the context of the classroom situation. Hence, collaborative action research, defined as "the application of tools and methods of social science to immediate, practical problems with the goals of contributing to theory and knowledge in the field of education and improving practice in schools" (Oja & Shulman, 1989, p.1) has gained in popularity.

Ironically, as teachers form partnerships with teacher educators/researchers to engage in research on teaching practices, few teacher educators join with one another to model the process of reflection and action research. When teacher educators/researchers join with one another to research their own practices, a number of benefits are possible including the documentation of the real world of teacher educators, a literature that is sparse. Such documentation may lead to insights and understandings into the various approaches to the education of teachers and hence yield meaningful improvement in teacher education. Additionally, if teacher educators collaboratively reflect and research their own teaching practices, an opportunity to model collaboration, reflection, and action research for prospective teachers emerges.

The goal of this paper is create a portrait of a teacher educator implementing the case study method. The portrait is created in an effort to expand our understanding of what it means to educate future teachers using the case study method, what knowledge helps a teacher educator facilitate a case study discussion, and what dilemmas teacher educators may encounter when teaching a case. Hence, this paper offers two stories of the teaching of two separate cases. Following each story is a cross-case analysis of the teaching act.

The stories were reconstructed based on data that was collected to foster reflection on the implementation of the case study method in teacher education. The data were naturalistic, an attempt to capture descriptive accounts of preparing prospective teachers through the discussion of cases. The data collected included the following: (1) Transcribed video and audio tape recordings of the teacher educator teaching a case. (2) Field notes taken by one of the researchers as a result of participant observation in the class during the presentation and discussions of case studies. (3) Written reflections of interviews (reflective coaching sessions) occurring between the two teacher educators/researchers following the teaching of a case. (4) Journal entries kept by each teacher educator following the teaching of a case and, (5) Reflections written by prospective teachers after engagement in case study discussion.

A constructivist epistemology (Bruner, 1986) was embodied into the collection and interpretation of data and the construction of the portraits reported in this paper. Constructivists view learning as an interpretive process in which individuals engage in unique constructions of

knowledge as they make sense of their experiences. Hence, particular attention was given to the sense making process we, as teacher educators, engaged in while planning, implementing and reflecting upon the teaching of a case.

Background and Context For Each Portrait

Two new doctoral students in elementary education at the Florida State University entered the small rectangular meeting room one day in the August of 1989. Both were filled with excitement and a certain stress at the thoughts of beginning their doctoral studies. This was the first day of doctoral seminar, and the instructor introduced herself and led the group in introductions. Two members of the group noted that they had much in common. Both just moved to Tallahassee, Florida from other locations, both had taught elementary school and had taught in programs for the gifted and talented, and both were pursuing their doctorates because of their interest in teacher preparation.

Two years and many courses and experiences later, these two students sat in an advanced doctoral seminar, this time noting a similarity in their emerging interests—the use of the case study method to prepare prospective teachers. One student decided to pursue this interest for her dissertation study (Floyd, 1992). The other student, although already engaged in an action research project with a group of teachers at a local elementary school for her dissertation study (Dana, 1991), found the use of cases intriguing and decided to begin experimenting with their use in a class she was teaching as part of her graduate assistantship.

The course was a four credit seminar taken concurrently with student teaching. The purpose of the class was to build on the students' experience by creating opportunities for students to broaden their perspectives on teaching through reflection and inquiry about teaching and its contexts. Among the topics included in the course were classroom organization and management, students with special needs, child abuse, professional ethics, stress management, and creating a professional portfolio. The class met seven full days during the semester from 8:30 AM—4:00 PM. On the days that classes met, preservice teachers did not report to their student teaching placements. A course syllabus is included in Appendix A.

Another year passed quickly as one of the students completed her action research project and dissertation and was hired as a visiting assistant professor for one year. A major portion of her responsibility was teaching two sections of the student teaching seminar course. As the other student began her dissertation study focusing on how prospective teachers come to know about teaching through the case study approach, she asked if she could collect data in the student teaching seminar classes. It occurred to both teacher educators that the context could be an exciting one to embark on an additional study together—teacher educators reflecting on the use of the case study method.

Portrait I: Dealing With Discipline and Classroom Management Issues

After the first day of student teaching seminar, an exhausted instructor returned to her office to digest the events of the day, and plan for the next seminar. One of the topics that was key to the course she was teaching was classroom management. The instructor knew from her experience supervising student teachers and teaching the seminar class that management was a common concern of almost all student teachers. She also knew that the 30 student teachers in her seminar class had very diverse student teaching placements, and believed that the student teachers could benefit greatly from engaging in professional dialogue with one another.

To facilitate the social construction of knowledge about teaching, (Bruner, 1989, Greeno, 1989), the instructor viewed data she had collected on each student teacher in her class, and began to organize the student teachers into 6 "base groups" containing five student teachers each.

She tried to organize the groups so that each contained student teachers from different schools, and student teachers from various grade levels. These base groups would meet each week to discuss a case study that correlated with the day's topic.

As she sat in her office thinking about the weeks ahead, she glanced through Kowalski, Weaver & Henson's (1990) Case Studies on Teaching. She noted that a number of the cases were related to classroom management. As she read these various cases trying to decide which one would be most dynamic and enlightening to use in her course, a thought occurred to her. Rather than selecting one case for all students to read simultaneously, each base group could be assigned a case to read and research and present to the class. In this way, a number of issues could be discussed in both small and large group discussion. This would also be a different approach to case study teaching. Based on her experiences, this teacher educator believed variety in the teaching of cases was key to their success. For this reason, she rarely viewed the "teaching notes" that accompanied cases and, instead, relied on her knowledge of the students in the class and how the case would fit into the context of the course to design the case presentations:

> I think that when teaching with cases it is imperative to incorporate their use in your course in various ways. Otherwise, they have the potential to become routine and mundane. Students might "go through the motions" but not really THINK. (Instructor journal entry, January 8, 1992).

To prepare for the class, she created a folder on each case study that included a copy of the case and copies of articles from various journals that might give insights into the situation presented in the case. The cases from Kowalski et. al's text included: (1) "Drug Abuse Is a Major Problem," (2) "Rodney Misbehaves," (3) "Cheating—A Problem for All," (4) "Spare the Rod and Spoil the Teacher?," and (5) "Preventing and Controlling Discipline Problems." Each of the cases contained some situation that was related to classroom management.

Following a presentation based on the text students were reading for the course, Discipline With Dignity (Curwin & Mendler, 1988), she handed out one folder to each base group and explained the assignment for next week:

> Each base group now has a folder that contains a case study dealing in some way with some issue related to classroom management. For next week, please read the case, and think about the key issues for discussion that appear at the end of the story. You may want to jot down your reaction and impressions so that you will be able to share those next week with your base group members. You will also find in the folder, a collection of literature from different journals that may give you insights into the particular case your base group is reading. In each folder there are enough articles so that everyone in your base group can take home at least one. Divide up the articles in your group and read those also. See if you can relate the professional reading to the case you are analyzing. Next week, we'll begin class with time for you to discuss your cases in base groups. We'll also be meeting with another class of student teachers who had the same assignment. After you discuss the case in your base group, you'll meet with the base group from the other class that discussed your same case. We'll round out the next seminar with each group sharing their particular case and the insights they gained from the literature and discussion. (Fieldnotes, January 22, 1992)

With the business of student teaching and all the responsibilities at the university, the next seminar class arrived quickly for both the students and the instructor. Students arrived to class to find tables labeled with their base group numbers. After students helped themselves to the coffee and donuts provided by one of the base groups each week, they found their seats. At 8:45 AM an energetic voice rang out:

Count off in your base groups using the numbers 1-5.

Students in each base group counted off. The voice continued:

Does everyone have a number? Good. Number ones, raise your hands.

In each base group, a student's hand was raised.

> Number ones, you are the summarizers. It is your job to begin your group's discussion of the case by summarizing the case your group read for today. You may also help throughout the small group discussion time by summarizing comments made by your base group members.
>
> Will number twos raise your hands? You are the small group discussion leaders. We are going to be spending the first 20 minutes of class today in small group discussion of your cases. It is your job to lead your base group in discussion.
>
> Number threes, raise your hands. You are the recorders. It is your job to jot down notes during your small group discussion. These notes may then later be used by number fours.
>
> Number fours, you are the large group discussion leaders. After your small group discusses the case, you will meet with the other base group that read and discussed the same case you were assigned. It is your job to lead this discussion, summarizing issues and impressions that surfaced during your group discussion.
>
> Finally, number fives, you are the time keepers. It's your job to watch the clock and keep the discussion moving. Remember, you have approximately 20 minutes to discuss your case and the related literature. After that, base groups with the same case meet together to compare notes and come up with a creative way to present your case to the entire class! Remember, think. What would you do in that situation? And always ask yourself, if it works, does that necessarily mean it is good?" (Fieldnotes, February 3, 1992)

Voices rang out as base groups began their discussions. Some conversations were calm and others quite adamant. Case 31: Preventing and Controlling Discipline Problems (Kowalski, Weaver & Henson, 1990, 145-148) caused lively dialogue to erupt between the prospective teachers in base group 5. The case described a fight that broke out between two students in an elementary school classroom, which ended with one student nursing a bloody nose and the entire class staring at the teacher, eager to see how she would respond. The Challenge posed at the end of the case read, "At some point in your career, you may face such a crisis. Suppose you were (the teacher), what would you do?" (Kowalski, Weaver, and Henson, 1990, p. 147).

The dialogue transpiring in one base group indicated that the prospective teachers in this group were quick to place blame for the situation on the teacher:

> She didn't give them any expectations. She didn't tell them what she expected from them at all! She didn't set the rules and limits. And if she ever did, she never really verbalized any to begin with!
>
> She should have seen the fight coming. She knew Bob was making comments to the other kid. All she did was stand up there, keep on teaching and hope eventually that the

class would get interested in what she was saying and be quiet. (Interview transcription, February 3, 1992)

Comments kept flying as to how inept this teacher was at classroom management. The instructor appeared and leaned over the back of one of the chairs and queried

What I hear you saying is that it was all her fault. What could she have done to prevent this fight from happening? What do you think she should have done afterward? What would you do? (Interview transcription, February 3, 1992)

Some of the members of the base group looked thoughtful and began to move beyond placing blame, to offering suggestions to this teacher based on their own experiences, impressions of school, and journal readings.

I think they need the two students to go to the office because they were fighting. If they're hitting each other, bleeding all over the place, they definitely need to go out of the room.

Would you take them?

You can't leave your classroom.

But what if something happens to them on the way?

I would never send two students like that by themselves. You need to send someone with them.

In the article I read, they talked about using "I Statements." If nothing else, she should have used an I statement and said, "I don't appreciate you interrupting my class." Or, maybe just used a directive statement, something like, "Stop talking! You are interrupting my class!"

Way before that she should have gotten her kids to come up with the set of rules for the classroom, saying what they didn't like. One of the articles I read discussed getting the kids to come up with a set of rules so that they have ownership.

Right, she could have avoided the whole thing if they had made the class rules together so that there wasn't a power struggle. Everyone would decide on the rules. It just doesn't sound like she planned any rules or consequences by herself or with the class. And her teaching techniques could have been improved. She needed something exciting to get their attention as soon as they walked into the room. And quit lecturing. Walk around the room.

Sometimes just the nearness of a teacher is enough to stop a kid from talking. And make the lesson exciting and involve everyone!

I agree. Some classes need a calm environment but others need an active one. She definitely needed an active one. (Interview transcription, February 3, 1992)

The instructor moved on to another group while the conversation continued:

Did you read this article? Read this. There's a lot of helpful hints . . . it's a really good article . . .

She could have a class meeting. This is a perfect time to say, "Okay, what rules do we need to establish in this room for this to not happen again?"

O.K., what about the principal? Do you think the principal would welcome the opportunity to discipline these kids?

Does he have a choice? Like I said before, they need to go to the office.

But then she's turning over her power to the principal, and it's too late.

That leaves no effect on her authority in the classroom. She's got to do something else to gain respect of the students in the class.

What time is it?

9:15 . . . We should start summarizing our points. Who's the summarizer? Am I?

Yeah, you summarize.

I thought I was just supposed to summarize in the beginning.

No, you have to help with the large group discussion too. Summarize for Brenda. (Interview transcription, February 3, 1992)

The student, with help from all the group members, summarized the points that were brought out in discussion as Brenda, the recorder, jotted them down.

"TIME," shouted the instructor. It was now time for the base groups with the same case to meet together and compare notes. A hum of noise filled the area as groups located each other and shared their thoughts. The two groups which had the case involving the fight converged and quickly got down to business.

I'm the summarizer from this group so let me tell you what our group came up with. We decided that the teacher needed to take more initiative. She should have established guidelines to begin with, then the class would have gotten off on the right track. Our group thought she could have gotten together with the students and come up with the rules and consequences. We also thought she should improve her teaching techniques. We thought the principal could offer her some help. It's his responsibility too, but she probably shouldn't send the children to the principal's office because that wouldn't solve the deeper problems that exist in her classroom. (Interview transcription, February 3, 1992)

Members of the other group shook their heads in agreement as the summarizer expressed these ideas. They, too, had discussed the same ideas. Both base groups began citing examples of how all these ideas related to their own internship classrooms. Then the summarizer for the other base group added to the discussion:

We came up with a very different issue. What do you do when there is blood in the classroom? What do you do when there is blood everywhere, like in this case? You're not supposed to touch it. So I mean, what are you supposed to do? We talked about being concerned about the child who was bleeding, but also being concerned about aides. We talked a long time not just about the classroom management, but moral and ethical issues of dealing with aides in the public school . . . We came up with

suggestions like have rubber gloves in the classroom. (Interview transcription, February 3, 1992)

When the issue of aides came up, the other base group members looked shocked, as their peers had found an issue in the case that never occurred to them. It was interesting how the same case was interpreted in different ways by the different base groups. As the groups discussed how very different interpretations of the same teaching act can be, the time keepers reminded the groups that time was running out and that they should decide how they will present the case to the whole class:

> We could lead a discussion about what you do in your classroom to stop misbehavior before it starts, and then tell about our case, or we could act it out or something.
>
> Okay, we could discuss it or role play it, or what?
>
> Let's role play. We could do like two scenarios. One scenario could be the case, where the students end up in a fight. And then we could do a scenario where the teacher acts differently so that the fight never happens.
>
> O.K., so how it was and how it could have been. Let's name roles here. Does anyone want to be the name caller? (Interview transcription, February 3, 1992)

The students completed planning the role play and when their turn arrived, presented it to the entire class. During the subsequent whole class discussion, similar issues and comments emerged including setting up a discipline plan, using effective teaching techniques, becoming aware of school policies on handling potentially dangerous situations, and investigating the issue of teacher liability. The instructor ended the session by summarizing the points and issues that arose during discussion, emphasizing the importance of being proactive rather than reactive, suggesting relevant literature for students to read on their own, and commenting on the complexity of the act of teaching.

Portrait II: Dealing with Special Needs Students

> Journal Entry. February 4, 1992. I do think the last class went very well. I was pleased for numerous reasons: (1) The literature was seen as valuable by many of the students. During large group discussion, several students commented that "the article I read was great! I recommend it." Some students did make copies of others' articles. And, in small group discussion, I heard people interject quite naturally with something to the effect of, "Well, in the article I read, it said . . ." One of my objectives is that young teachers READ! I know it sounds funny, but I know that too many beginning teachers are so overwhelmed with their first year of teaching, they often don't read professionally —understandably so. But I'm frightened this habit will not end as they progress in their careers and reading professional literature is so important. I'm glad they found value in what they read and also were able to see that reading does relate to real experiences and can help give insights into a particular situation. (2) When two groups who read the same case came together, they saw that every group didn't necessarily discuss the same issues. They are learning that many more than one perspective exist—this was certainly reinforced in large group discussion! . . . Overall, I would characterize the case discussions as dynamic. I enjoyed being the facilitator. I realize the day did "get long" and the discussions at the end of the day perhaps weren't as dynamic as all (including me) were tired! As instructor, I still am trying to manage the dilemma of time. This seems key to a good case discussion. Too much or too little greatly affects the success of the case discussions . . . and this all rests with me to make those decisions. I continue to learn and grow professionally with each semester I've used cases in this class. I guess,

> like my students, I have to realize that there are no "right" ways to facilitating these discussions. . . Enough for today. I have to get ready for tomorrow's class. (Journal Entry, February 4, 1992).

The next seminar class was to be devoted to the topic of "Students With Special Needs." The instructor chose a longer, more complicated case study for discussion than those she had selected from the Kowalski text. The Case of Joan Martin, Marilyn Coe, and Warren Groves, selected from Case Studies for Teacher Problem Solving (Silverman, Welty, & Lyons, 1992) was the story of a child named Donald who had been mainstreamed into a regular classroom for social studies instruction. In the text of the case, Donald Garcia was described as:

> . . . a 9-year-old, (who) had spent two years in the self-contained LD class. He was an only child, living with his mother and father . . . The Committee on Special Education report noted that Donald's mother, whose native language was Spanish, spoke English with some difficulty. Donald understood but did not speak Spanish (Silverman, Welty, & Lyon, p. 60).

Conflict arose when the classroom teacher, the special education teacher, and the elementary school principal held different views regarding the role of mainstreaming and Donald's performance in the regular classroom. The case consisted of the story of Donald being told from three different points of view -- that of Joan Martin, the classroom teacher, Marilyn Coe, the special education teacher, and Warren Groves, the school principal.

The instructor chose this case not only because it correlated with the topic to be discussed during seminar class, but because she found the format of the case intriguing. The same story being told from three different view points might encourage the student teachers to begin to understand the complexity of teaching, and how situations encountered by teachers are constructed as individuals interact with one another. To teach this case, she decided to incorporate concept mapping (Novak & Gowin, 1984). She gathered her markers and chart paper and constructed the following concept map template for each base group:

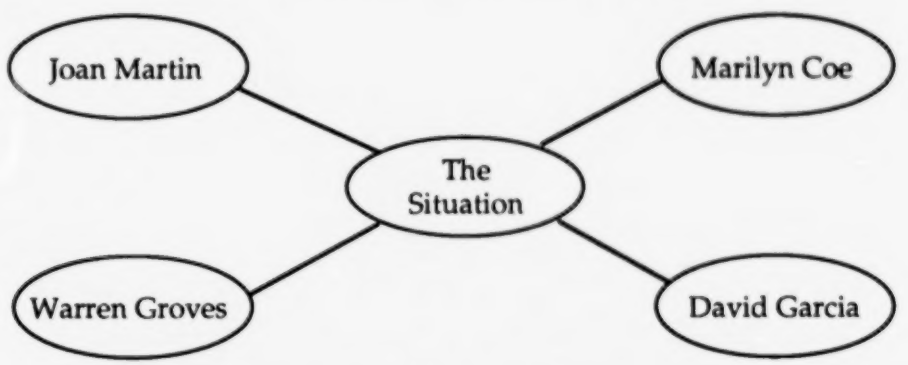

Figure 1. Concept Map Template

She then rolled each template up and attached index cards to each one. The set of index cards attached to each map were labeled with each of the character's names. Finally, she attached one copy of the case study. She was ready to teach the case.

When the student teachers arrived to class and sat down with their base groups, the room was so full of chatter about the latest student teaching stories and upcoming graduation that no one seemed to pay attention to the rolled up chart paper with attachments that sat on each table. At 8:30 AM, the instructor's voice could be heard above the chatter:

> We have much to do today, so let's get started. Today's topic is students with special needs. I'd like to begin by reading a case to you. (Fieldnotes, February 12, 1992).

All the student teachers listened intently as the instructor read to them about Joan Martin, a fourth grade teacher who was frustrated with the performance of one of the students who had been mainstreamed into her class. When the instructor completed the narrative about Joan, she asked a student to read Marilyn's story. She repeated this procedure for the third character, the principal. The three narratives all ended with each charter contemplating the meeting that was to occur between the three of them to discuss Donald's situation the following day. At the completion of the case reading the instructor thanked the students who read aloud and called out:

> Look on your tables. You will find a stack of index cards attached to a large piece of rolled up chart paper. Someone pick those up and hand one card out to each person in your base group. Also, there is a copy of the case on the table. Hand that to somebody. So each person should have something now. Okay, here's your task. Unroll the chart paper that's on your table. Does that look familiar to anybody? It is the beginning of a concept map. We're going to use this to organize our thinking about the case. In the center of the map you have "the situation." Connected to the situation are the four characters involved—Joan, Marilyn, Warren, and Donald. As you heard in the case, these characters all view the same situation a bit differently. Your first task is to get the facts straight about the case—it is a complicated scenario. Fill in the map with facts about each character, for example, how long have they been teaching, etc. What are their beliefs about teaching? And finally, what kind of teacher or principal is he or she? The person in your base group who is holding the Joan card, you are responsible for filling in that portion of the map. The person in your base group who is holding the Marilyn card, you are responsible for Marilyn, the same for the person holding the Warren card and the Donald card. Now, the person who has the case in their hand, raise your hand. It is your job to help these people by checking facts about each person in the case as they fill in the concept map. After you have gotten the facts down, note that each person is connected to the situation. Ask yourself, how does each person perceive the situation. How might they go into the meeting? Any questions? Get going. You have 20 minutes to do this. You all can help each other out. Don't put the one person with the card on the spot (Interview transcription, February 12, 1992).

Loud chatter filled the meeting room. All base groups worked quickly to get the facts down about the characters and draw the connections that they perceived to be there. Some comments could be clearly heard coming out of different base groups:

> Donald wants to stay with the social studies class. I think he likes being with his peers.
>
> Marilyn wants to protect her mainstreaming program. Do you think that's an appropriate way to put that down?
>
> Hey, I'm Donald. I'm just immature. My mom's Spanish and I don't get a lot of language involvement at home!

> The principal really likes Joan. She makes him look good. I see him as a fence sitter. He wants both teachers to come out winners but he's unwilling to take a stand. Why can't he compromise? He's sitting on the fence.
>
> There's nothing physical mentioned about Warren (the principal). Joan's reflective. Warren likes strong teachers. He trusts them to make the right decision. (Interview transcription, February 12, 1992)

Twenty minutes was up. The instructor called out:

> Hopefully, everyone has the facts straight and talked about how each person will perceive the situation and go into the meeting. Now if you're holding a Warren card, raise your hand. I want you to be Warren. If you have a Marilyn card, raise your hand. I want you to be Marilyn. If you have a Joan card, raise your hand. I want you to be Joan. What I would like you to do is to role play the meeting. Take about five minutes. (Interview transcription, February 12, 1992)

Some of the base groups started off role playing slowly while others could be heard jumping into their roles immediately. The instructor once again called out time, and with a grin stated:

> Now the fun really begins. I need volunteers up front to role play this meeting! (Interview transcription, February 12, 1992)

For approximately an hour the role plays and discussion ensued. At one point, a student's voice interrupted the role play in progress, "Everybody's talking about Donald like he's an object, nobody is asking him what he feels or thinks."

This comment appeared to disturb many of the student teachers, and many expressed that they had gotten so caught up in their own views that they had taken the perspective of the child for granted. Large group discussion focused on the number of times the perspective of any child is hidden and/or lost as the adults in schools discuss and debate "what is best for children."

Understanding that Donald's perspective had been taken for granted led preservice teachers to further examine the data that was presented in the case regarding Donald. Prior to class discussion, most preservice teachers used the label "learning disabled" that was assigned to Donald to make sense of how Donald was experiencing school. Yet, through small group and large group discussion of the case, preservice teachers came to understand that the label Donald was assigned so dominated their thinking that they were blinded by cultural and contextual factors that related to the case. This assertion is best exemplified by one student's contribution to the discussion that caused the prospective teachers to acknowledge and examine their own prejudices. While students now acknowledged the need to find out what the child, Donald, felt and thought about being mainstreamed, one student took issue with the special education label which had been placed on Donald. When this point was brought out in the large group discussion, the decision was not whether or not to mainstream this child, but whether or not this child was actually learning disabled:

> The cultural difference of the child, that has been totally taken for granted in the situation . . . . This child may not necessarily be learning disabled. He just knows how to learn but from a different language. (Interview transcription, February 12, 1992)

The instructor followed with:

> So I hear you saying that we may have a question here. So we started out kind of getting the facts filled in on the concept maps. And all of you put that Donald was LD. But now we have a *questionable* fact. Does Donald actually have a learning disability, or has he just been labeled LD by the school system? Hummm. I think we're seeing a shift in what we are talking about. Do you all see the difference? (Interview transcription, February 12, 1992)

Conversation continued with multiple perspectives surfacing. The instructor closed the session by asking the students to write a reflection focusing on what they had first thought about the case and then to write about their thoughts after talking it out today. Later, the instructor smiled as she read some of the reflections in her office. The reflections were testimonials to the power of this particular case (see also, Dana & Floyd, 1993):

> My first concerns about the case dealt mainly with the two teachers that are involved. After interning for several weeks now, I realize the lack of time available throughout the school day, and so I sympathized with the classroom teacher in that she cannot take extra time to "tutor" Donald. I also sympathized with the special education teacher in that she is working hard and trying to do the best for her LD students. But what really disturbs me is that my thoughts about Donald were <u>last</u> instead of <u>first</u>. After discussing the case, I realize that we are talking about <u>Donald</u> here—a young, pleasant boy who is having problems with his learning. (Student post discussion reflection, February, 1992)

> My thoughts about the case as it was presented at the beginning of class were neither here nor there. I was unconcerned about Donald's well being and sympathized with the teachers. After the discussion of the case my thoughts and feelings did a 180 degree turn! . . . The two teachers need to understand that Donald comes first in any decision they choose to make. (Student post discussion reflection, February, 1992)

> I have learned as a result of this case that there are many perspectives to any problem. It's not like I didn't know that before, but to actually experience seeing the different perspectives in action brought it to life. I realize now how my perspectives affect my decisions as a teacher. (Student post-discussion reflection, February, 1992)

> My opinion about this case study definitely changed as we discussed it in our groups. At first, I thought that it was unfair to Donald as well as the teachers to keep him in the regular classroom. But as we talked about the case, I realized a lot more! After our discussion, I really believe Donald may not be LD. He is facing many cultural differences! I hadn't considered this before our discussion. (Student post discussion reflection, February, 1992)

> What was most interesting was that when our group talked . . . we never questioned whether Donald was really LD or not, which is sad. (Student Reflection, February, 1992)

> I hadn't really thought about the issue of Donald <u>not</u> being LD until it was brought up in our class discussion. It is a very interesting point. I bet a lot could be discovered through exploring a child's cultural background . . . . (In Donald's case), maybe progress could be made in a bilingual class. Perhaps he could understand things better if he heard them in Spanish. More avenues that take into account cultural diversity need to be explored. I will keep this in mind as I face "Donalds" in my teaching career. (Student post-discussion reflection, February, 1992)

After reading these reflections, the instructor pulled out her journal and wrote:

> I think the case went well this morning. Again, a different approach to the presentation of the case and the discussion—I think that is key. I wouldn't want a case presentation or discussion to become routine or standardized! . . . I'm anxious to watch the video on this one. For me, the large group discussion was most dynamic. To see the discussion move from "the teachers" and keeping them "happy" to "Donald" and "what's best for him," and "is he really LD anyway?" was just beautiful. I saw in many of the students' faces an "AHA" experience. This is reflected in their reflections on the case. Wow! They're thinking and they are beginning to question, not just take for granted, as in, "Is Donald really LD anyway? Just great. (Instructor journal entry, February 14, 1992).

Cross-Case Analysis

A cross case analysis was conducted to address the following research question: (1) What knowledge helps a teacher educator facilitate a case study discussion?, (2) What pedagogical approaches do teacher educators use when teaching cases?, and (3) What dilemmas might teacher educators face during case study discussions? For the purposes of cross case analysis, each of the data sources used to construct the portraits were read numerous times both before, during, and after portrait construction. During readings, patterns in the data were sought (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As patterns emerged, they were marked on the data source and sorted during the construction of each portrait. We then conducted a systematic search of the data, looking for disconfirming and confirming evidence to support the patterns (Erickson, 1986). In addition, as patterns emerged, we searched for and read relevant literature related to the patterns. The patterns that were identified from looking across the cases were (1) Knowledge and implementation of cooperative learning, (2) The use of role play as a vehicle to discuss a case, and (3) The tensions of timing case study discussions.

Knowledge and Implementation of Cooperative Learning. In both portraits, the instructor weaved the implementation of cooperative learning techniques into the teaching of a case. In general, cooperative learning is defined as a formalized approach to classroom instruction that explicitly tries to maximize children's (or in this case, prospective teachers') ability to work and learn together (Watson, Hilderbrandt, & Solomon, 1988). The three major developers and researchers in this area are Robert T. Johnson and David Johnson of the University of Minnesota at Minneapolis and Robert Slavin of the Johns Hopkins University Team Learning Project in Baltimore, Maryland. The main differences between Slavin and Johnson and Johnson appear to be the specificity of their models. Slavin's models are explicit while the Johnson and Johnson's model serves as a general framework that can be applied in many different situations. The work of all three theorists on cooperative learning was used to plan and organize case study discussion.

One type of cooperative learning described by Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1988) is Base Groups. Base groups are described as:

> Long term, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups with stable membership. The primary responsibility of members is to provide each other with the support, encouragement, and assistance they need to make academic progress. . . The base group is the source of permanent and caring peer relationships within which students are committed to and support each other's educational success. (p. 8:4).

In order to facilitate the discussion of cases in this study, the instructor organized prospective teachers into base groups that met throughout the course. The base groups were heterogeneous in that each group contained student teachers who were placed at different schools and in different grade levels. The heterogeneous make up of base groups allowed the prospective teachers to engage in dialogue with others who had very different experiences from themselves and, thus, helped the prospective teachers realize the importance of context and perspective when

discussing a case. The heterogeneous groupings also encouraged the discussion of different points of view during small group discussion of cases.

In both portraits, small group (base group) discussion was a prelude to whole class discussion of a case. This pedagogical strategy may be viewed as a beneficial approach to teaching cases as every class member is afforded more opportunity to voice their thoughts and articulate their beliefs in relation to a case under study. When whole class, large group discussion is the sole medium for discussion of a case, all class members may not have the opportunity to participate. Base groups (containing only 5-6 students) offer a larger opportunity for participation. Participation in case discussion can be assured by the structuring of positive group interdependence, an element essential for cooperative learning as described by Johnson and Johnson.

Positive interdependence is described by Johnson and Johnson as building into the group the feelings of "We sink or swim together," and "None of us are as smart as all of us." This can be accomplished in various ways including having one group goal, dividing up labor, dividing materials, and assigning students different roles. In the classroom management case study discussion, the instructor structured positive group interdependence in the following ways: (1) Each base group was given one folder containing a copy of the case and a number of articles relating to the case. Each member of the base group read and was responsible for a different article. Group members had to depend on each other to complete the readings. (2) Before small group discussion, each member of the base group was assigned a role including summarizer, large group discussion leader, small group discussion leader, recorder, and time keeper. Each role was explained as it was assigned. As each prospective teacher was assigned a specific role to play during small group discussion, it was difficult for any one student to "sit back" and not participate. Similarly, in the students with special needs case study discussion, positive group interdependence was structured when materials for the case were handed out. Each group member was responsible for either knowing about a particular character or checking the "facts" in the one copy of the case that was available at each base group table. The structuring of positive group interdependence during small group discussion is one strategy teacher educators may use to assure that small group discussions stay focused on the case and that everyone in the class participates in case discussions.

Slavin's work in cooperative learning includes the development of various methods including Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD), Teams-Games Tournament (TGT) and Jigsaw (Slavin, 1981). The instructor implemented a modified version of Slavin's jigsaw during the classroom management case discussions.

In jigsaw, each individual has the responsibility of becoming an "expert" on a piece of material. "Expert groups" meet to learn and discuss. Each individual then returns and teaches their teammates. When the classroom management cases were discussed, each group received a different case with accompanying literature to master. Members of the each group "divided and conquered" the reading of related literature by being responsible for different articles. In subsequent case discussion, they were then able to share insights into the case based on the article that was read. As students shared insights from articles during case discussion, many students made copies of articles their group members shared to add to their professional collections. Following initial discussion of the case, each base group met with their counterpart from another section of the class to share and compare case analyses. This larger group then presented their case to the class. In essence, each group devised a way to "teach" their case. Five different cases were presented by different groups, followed by whole class discussion. Teaching cases through the jigsaw method enables prospective teachers to not only analyze the case through small group discussion, but to test their analyses and interpretations as they devise ways to present the case to the whole class. In addition, a jigsaw approach to the teaching of cases is time efficient. A number of different cases that are variants of the same theme can be discussed in one class session. This also creates an opportunity for prospective teachers to conduct cross case analyses, looking

for themes and patterns that emerge across the discussion of all the different cases discussed in the jigsaw.

The Use of Role Play as a Vehicle to Discuss a Case. In both portraits, the narrative presentation of the cases were transformed into an enactment through role play. In portrait one, the prospective teachers themselves selected role play as a pedagogical approach to lead their fellow classmates in discussion. They decided to enact two scenarios, one as the case was presented in narrative form, and one incorporating the ideas and suggestions they discussed during case analysis. In portrait two, the instructor selected role play to assure that all members of the small group participated during small group discussion, and to bring to life the multiple perspectives of the adult characters and the child who were the main focus of the case during whole class discussion.

Role play occurs when students "assume roles voluntarily to enact interpersonal situations where the outcome is undetermined" (Woolever & Scott, 1988). Two of the most noted scholars in the area of role play are Fanny and George Shaftel. According to Fanny Shaftel, role playing "is a group of problem-solving procedures that employs all the techniques of critical evaluation implied in the terms 'listening,' 'discussion,' and 'problem solving' and is akin to the research procedures which behavioral scientist term simulation and theory of games" (Shaftel, 1982, 9 as cited in Nelson, 1992).

Hence, through the role playing of cases, prospective teachers may become engaged in critical evaluation of the act of teaching. Together, prospective teachers and the teacher educator can recognize and solve problems and conflicts associated with life in schools. This may help prospective teachers develop an understanding of how to approach and solve problems with fellow professionals. In addition, role playing may help prospective teachers develop empathy for others with whom they will work and solve educational problems with during their careers. In the students with special needs case, this included administration (represented by the principal, Warren Groves) and non-classroom, special area teachers (represented by the special education teacher, Marilyn Coe). Perhaps most important, however, was the empathy developed for the child in the case, Donald. Through role play of cases, prospective teachers may be afforded the opportunity to view school and classroom life through the eyes of a child.

There exist multiple benefits to enacting a case study through role play. Shaftel and Shaftel (1982) state:

> Role playing provides the opportunity to explore, through spontaneous improvisation and careful guided discussion, typical group problem situations in which individuals are helped to become sensitive to the feelings of the people involved, where the consequences of choices made are delineated by the group, and where members are helped to explore the kinds of behavior society will sanction. (p. 64)

The benefits of employing role play in the classroom as summarized by Shaftel and Shaftel can be applied to the use of role play when teaching cases in the following ways: (1) By playing different parts, prospective teachers may gain insights into the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of others, even if it is different from what they would do in the situation, (2) Prospective teachers may come to understand that behavior of students (and other professionals) in schools is caused by multiple influences, (3) Prospective teachers may develop sensitivity to the feelings and perspective of the children with who they will be working, as well as other professionals in the school and, (4) Prospective teachers are given the opportunity to clarify their own values and beliefs regarding teaching before making and acting on decisions.

The tensions of timing. Although there are benefits to the use of cooperative learning and role playing in the presentation of teaching cases for discussion, one tension teacher educators may

face when employing these techniques is the timing of case study discussions and analyses. This was exemplified in the journal entry of the case study instructor that occurred between the teaching of the classroom management cases and the case of Joan Martin, Marilyn Coe, and Warren Groves. The issue of time was also repeated throughout all journal entries reflecting on specific case teaching episodes occurring in the course:

> I tend to always be in a hurry when I teach. I tried today, especially during the case study discussions, not to rush students. One aspect that's difficult is deciding, "How long do I allow small group discussion to continue? Large group discussion?" I worry that some students may loose interest. This is a place I could use some feedback—perhaps seeing some transcripts of case discussions might help. (Instructor journal entry, January 8, 1992)

> I continue to be concerned about TIME. If you noticed, I was concerned with the 2 small groups who had finished their case study discussion early. I'm glad you were sitting with one of those "quick" groups because you made a comment that helped me realize something during our reflective coaching session. You said something to the effect of perhaps the most valuable part of using cases is the conversations and thinking that occurs after the actual discussion—"after the task." I continue to fight a positivistic metaphor of "time on task." It seems to me that to be successful at "teaching cases" (which doesn't mean, by the way, a didactic approach) one must really redefine or reconceptualize what "time on task" means. (Instructor journal entry, February 14, 1992)

> I think the case went very well this morning . . . I think 6 people in a group was too many. In small groups, often I found 2 discussions taking place (a group of 4 and a group of 2) but then again, is that so bad? Am I still caught in the "on task" thing? (Instructor journal entry, February 14, 1992).

Hence, when teaching cases through cooperative learning and role play, tensions arise when teacher educators must make decisions regarding their role as facilitator of discussion. A number of decisions must be made "in action" such as "How long should the discussion continue?" Tensions may heighten when teacher educators use a positivistic framework of more traditional university lectures as a referent to help them make decisions during case study teaching. In this study, the teacher educator continued to grapple with what is meant by "time on task" and to struggle with traditional concepts of university teaching. Teacher educators employing the case study method may find such struggles difficult due to the culture of the university. According to Common (1993):

> Large classes and lecturing now replace, especially at the undergraduate level, seminars and Socratic conversation as the institutions' ideas of best practice . . . Teaching at the university is linked so much to lecturing that building designs incorporate large lecture halls as standard institutional issue. (p. 9)

Certainly, in many cases, the culture of the university is not conducive to teaching with cases. This is important to understand as such a culture may constrain the approaches taken to teaching cases as well as the decisions teacher educators may make during case study discussion facilitation.

Wrestling with these issues through reflection takes time and a great deal of energy. The time and energy expended in both wrestling with issues inherent in teaching cases as well as extra time spent planning the teaching of a case through cooperative learning and role play (i.e., the development of base groups, the preparation of materials, etc.) was noted by the teacher educator as exhausting:

> Using cases is exhausting for the instructor. I believe their success in the class is based on . . . developing discussion facilitation skills. I tried my best to be a good facilitator—a difficult role for a teacher at best. What makes a good facilitator? This question needs to be further explored in the context of cases especially. I continue to question my skills and develop. Most difficult—especially with such diverse learners! Some want to "stay on a topic" for a long time, others get bored! Some want answers or solutions, some just enjoy listening and evaluating for themselves, some love to talk and contribute, some "drift off" as these classmates elaborate. How does an instructor account for this during the teaching of cases? Continual dilemmas and decision making— exhausting! (Instructor journal entry, April 10. 1992).

Conclusions

The results of this study give insights into the experience of teaching a case and the multiple tensions instructors of cases may face as they prepare for and teach a case study. Cooperative learning and role playing are two strategies particularly suited to the teaching of cases. Through cooperative learning strategies such as structuring positive interdependence, educators can ensure that all class members are involved in case discussion and analysis. Furthermore, a jigsaw approach to teaching cases similar in theme can enable prospective teachers to conduct cross case analyses. Cross case analyses may provide an opportunity for prospective teachers to construct and test personal theories of teaching and learning. Role playing cases may also help prospective teachers reflect on their personal theories as it is through role play that prospective teachers can enact the problems presented in the cases and their potential solutions to these problems.

When teaching cases through cooperative learning and role play, teacher educators must make a number of decisions as they direct and redirect discussion in their role as facilitator. Additional research is needed into discussion facilitation, particularly as it related to case study teaching. Such research may help teacher educators better understand their actions and the implications of those actions for case study teaching.

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Appendix A

Course Syllabi

EDE 4421: Classroom Organization and Pupil Evaluation
Spring 1992 Sections 1 and 2

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Course Overview

This course is related to, and in fact builds upon, the students' classroom experience during student teaching and previous university coursework in the Elementary Education program. The goal is to integrate theory into practice. The seminar is designed to help students broaden their perspectives on teaching to stimulate reflection and inquiry about teaching and its contexts, to consider the rationales underlying alternative possibilities for classrooms and pedagogy, and to help students assess their own developing perspectives toward teaching.

Course Objectives

1. The student teacher will complete a study of his/her school and community.

2. Based on readings and discussions, the student teacher will successfully develop a discipline plan and procedure for implementation as a beginning teacher.

3. The student teacher will describe techniques and procedures appropriate to the needs of special populations such as multicultural, at-risk, and mainstreamed students.

4. The student teacher will demonstrate professional behaviors appropriate for entry into the profession (ethics, FPMS, certification, stress management, etc.)

5. The student teacher will demonstrate the technique of reflection by relating professional insights during class discussions.

Textbook:

Curwin, R.L. & Mendler, A.N. (1988). Discipline With Dignity. Association For Curriculum and Development.

Posner, G.J. (1989). Field Experience: Methods of Reflective Teaching. White Plains, New York: Longman Inc.

Readings Packet. - A collection of reading materials will be available for purchase at Target.

Attendance:

This class is organized in a workshop setting with many class activities and assignments taking place during seminar sessions. Therefore, attendance is required. In cases of emergencies, your university supervisor and seminar instructor must be notified in advance and make-up arrangements made. Absences and latenesses will adversely affect your grade. The final grade will be lowered one grade for each unexcused absence or absence not made-up.

Class Meetings The seminar constitutes 60 hours of class work. We will meet 7 full days during the semester from 8:30 - 4:00. On the days that our class meets, you do not report to your school. Dates for class meetings will be scheduled the first day of class. A tentative schedule of topics and assignments is listed below:

Class One
Introductions
Orientation
Supervisor Meeting
The Case of Marsha Warren
Posner: The Commonplaces of Schooling

Assignment Read Posner pp. 3-59; 117-138
Prepare Presentation

Class Two
Classroom Discipline & Management
School Presentations

Assignment Read Case Study on Discipline/Classroom Management
Write your reactions . . . What would you do in the situation? What are your thoughts?
Read an article that compliments your study.

Class Three
Discipline/Management Case Study Discussions
Professional Topics

Assignment Read:
Base Group 1 - Discipline W/ Dignity Ch. 2
Base Group 2 - Discipline W/ Dignity Ch. 3
Base Group 3 - Discipline W/ Dignity Ch. 4
Base Group 4 - Discipline W/ Dignity Ch. 5
Base Group 5 - Discipline W/ Dignity Ch. 6

Class Four
Discipline W/ Dignity Jigsaw Discussion
Professional Topics

Assignment Read Discipline With Dignity Ch. 8 and 10

Class Five
Students With Special Needs
The Case of Marilyn Coe, Joan Martin, Warren Groves and Donald
Build A Class Card Activity (* * * Bring one deck of playing cards with you today. * * *)

Assignment Read Discipline With Dignity Ch. 7
Write a case study based on your experience.

Class Six
Stress Management
Case Study Discussions

Assignment Complete Portfolio

Class Seven
Putting It All Together
Interviewing
Evaluation

DUE: Portfolio

Assignments And Evaluation

EDE 4421 is a graded course (A-F). Final grade will be determined from the following assignments:

30% School Group Presentation
20% Case Study
35% Portfolio
15% Reflections

School Data Collection Presentation

During the first two weeks of student teaching you will be spending the majority of your time observing. Several data collection assignments have been developed in an effort to help you focus and reflect on your observations. Using the exercises and reading material listed below, data will be collected individually. Student teachers at each school will compile their data and develop a class presentation to be presented during the second class meeting.

I. The Learner
   A. Conversations With Students (Exercise 4.2, Posner)
   B. Observing Students (Exercise 4.6, Posner)
   C. Who Are The Students? (Exercise 5.5, Posner)

II. The Teacher
   A. A Visit to the Faculty Room (Exercise 4.4, Posner)
   B. Lesson Profile (Exercise 5.2)

III. The Social Milieu
   A. Analysis of the Community (Exercise 4.1, Posner)
   B. A Walk Around the School (Exercise 4.2, Posner)
   C. Classroom Map (Exercise 5.1, Posner)

IV. The Subject Matter

A. Record Keeping, Computers & A/V. Talk to your teacher about all record keeping involved in teaching (grades, cum folders, report cards, etc.) Explore computer and A/V materials. Try the different software that is available in your school.

B. Textbooks (Identify the textbooks used with each group to which you will provide instruction (title, publishing company, edition, grade level, and point in text where children are working). Examine both student and teacher's edition. Give a brief description and your analysis of each text used. Also identify and describe other instructional materials (reading systems, learning activity packets, etc.) used in your classroom.)

C. Media Center (Check the resource of the media center in your school. Can library units be put together? Can materials on a topic be gathered? How about movies, videotapes, or other media resources?

Case Study. During many of the student teaching seminars we will be discussing "case studies." Case studies are descriptions of happenings from student and first year teachers. Based on your experiences student teaching, you are to create your own case study following the examples used in class. These will be the basis for small group discussions the week before full time teaching begins.

Your case study may follow the format of the case studies we've discussed in class, or be creative (write it as a journal entry or news report etc.)! However you select to tell your story, it should contain these three features:

1. Detailed description of the event or problem.
2. Key issues or questions for discussion.
3. Suggested Readings. (An annotated bibliography with at least five references related to your case.)

Please type and bring a copy for each of your group members and one copy to turn it.

Portfolio

This should be your best representation of you and your teaching. This assignment is open to your interpretation and creativity. Although this is due the last week of class, YOU MUST START PLANNING AND COLLECTING the first week of student teaching! Your portfolio should include the following:

1. Resume with cover letter
2. Your philosophy of education
3. Sample lesson plans
4. Copy of theme unit or other units you have developed.
5. Pictures (Remember a picture is worth a thousand words!)
6. Place for letters of recommendation
8. Other ? ? ?
   (samples of student work, portions of Block III portfolios, etc.)

Reflections

At various times during the semester, you will be asked to record your reflections and/or reactions to readings done at home or in class. These reflections will ALWAYS be collected.